

Matthew 23-05-07b

We're ready to pick up our study now. We are looking at the Lord Jesus and his time Accomplishing the work of salvation on the cross it's a Sobering experience to review and to go through the scriptures that pertain we've gone back to Psalm 22 as we look at this this moment in the plan of God and we are Assured that this portion of God's Word in particular was in the heart and mind of the Lord Jesus at This time at this moment and it is part of the power of God That did not desert him did not forsake him. It sustained him and Comforted him and encouraged him on the cross and what kind of comfort and encouragement is it? It is the name of God.

It is his history. It is his demonstrated righteousness and justice and power in the history of Israel in contrast to people who Ridicule treat him as a worm a reproach Shooting out the lip shaking the head Saying he trusted in the Lord let him rescue him. Let him deliver him since he delights in him if this man And and the very same evidence cuts the response directly into what is the first thing that Nicodemus says in John chapter 3 when he comes to the Lord Jesus by night No one could say and do what you say and do if he were not from God and yet These people say if he were from God He would come down from the cross and we would see and believe in him He's not doing what I expect God to do This is the argument if you can get an atheist to talk about why they have no use for God or the Bible or Christ or salvation and They think it's all Biogenesis and evolution and it's materialism and I don't know how it happened But whatever it was it wasn't God and there is no God and I am my own Definition I'll be my own God.

I can determine my own fate. I'll define myself. I'll change myself by my own means or not but the universal thing is that What may be known of God is manifest and it is Rejected that's not God if there were a God there wouldn't be world hunger if there were a God there wouldn't be war if there were a God he would stop child abuse and he would why would he allow cancer can't there can't be a God because there's cancer and People set themselves up as the standard For what God would and would not do I know what God would do if there were a God he would do what I think he would do He would be a God in my image because if I had godlike power, I would end world hunger.

I would Eliminate cancer. I would stop suffering I would vaporize child abusers and rapists and murderers and all kinds of nefarious and then pretty soon I'd start vaporizing everybody that disagrees with me politically because you know, they're dangerous and people believe that God if he existed would think like them and The very definition of God is he doesn't think like us and thank the Lord He doesn't his ways are higher than our ways. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts his strategy is Above and beyond what we often are able to grasp or understand.

That's why we have faith Faith says I May not Know all of the causes conditions successions and relations. I don't know the outworking of this. I don't know why this

promising fruitful Godly young teenager was tragically killed in a drunk driving Accident or in a school bus collision or in a school shooting or in some other? unforeseen and catastrophic Incident and this life was just beginning so much promise such a wonderful person and so much potential and cut short Just gone in the blink of an eye.

How can there be a God that would let this happen and especially for someone who is a parent And loses a child in that way and and there are many other circumstances That one is the first one that comes to mind but people Have thrown over their faith thinking well, if there were a God this wouldn't happen. I Prayed and prayed and God didn't honor my prayer Therefore I I just don't think there's a God if there was a God he would have had to answer my prayer Because I know what God would could and should do and the Unrecognized arrogance in that is The opposite of humility and it is humility that is required for faith It is humility that is required for repentance. It is humility that says Since there is a God I am sure his power his understanding his wisdom Far exceeds my own.

I Will trust him and I will trust myself my life and my future to him Because he understands what I don't he knows what I don't he sees the end from the beginning he works all things together for good and the challenge to our faith is when it doesn't seem that way and That's what you find in Psalm 22. My god. My god.

What have you left me to? I Am crying out and I don't hear an immediate response You It says far from helping me the words of my groaning I'm groaning here and The situation that is causing it doesn't cease. I cry out it doesn't stop I am in the midst of a Horrific challenge and it continues Our definition of God would be well, he's going to stop this as soon as I say Lord deliver me Lord I want to come down from the cross and Yet that's Can you imagine? What would the world be? What would our faith be? What would have been the outcome if Jesus had heard these? scornful Ridiculous, you know the word ridiculous has at its core ridicule. It is Something so off the mark that it should be ridiculed.

It's ridicule us If Jesus had heard these Shameful spiteful scornful arrogant Self-satisfied comments and had said All right, you want to see me come down from the cross here I come Two things would have been the result first of all our salvation would not have been accomplished on that occasion and secondly those who said Come down from the cross. We will see and believe Would have seen but not believed They saw Lazarus and did not believe They saw and heard of tremendous works, I'll give you a a clue to this and The rest of Psalm 22 we could dwell on it for weeks. You're familiar with it we covered it in our psalm study, but turn back now to Matthew and Look at these words of scorn Look at verse 42 He saved others himself he cannot save Does that shock you the way it shocks me Look at the statement They acknowledge That he delivered others They cannot refute the miracles that established his identity and his source in God They can't refute it they acknowledge it he delivered others It's a recognition of a fact When

they knew him as God Romans 1 they did not glorify him as God Neither were they thankful But they become empty in their imagination and their foolish heart is darkened They know him as God they acknowledge he delivered others.

Do you see the claim? He delivered others they admit it they acknowledge it they know it It doesn't convince them if those miracles done in Jerusalem at the Pool of Siloam and Elsewhere if those did not convince them Lazarus Being raised from the dead in Bethany just over the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem You don't think there were eyewitnesses. You don't think that story traveled like electricity through the entire land They can't refute it they acknowledge it, but it does not convince this scares me to death To have the truth of God Inarguably Expressed you can't refute it you can't dismiss it you can't explain it away he Saved others he delivered others but I'm gonna dismiss that because he hasn't delivered himself if he were God he would deliver himself Because I know exactly how the plan of God works. I know the way God would really act and do The arrogance of it the blindness of it and the acknowledging of a truth without that truth penetrating and Causing someone to draw the appropriate conclusion the way that it did Nicodemus No one could do these things unless he were from God Nicodemus sees it Joseph of Arimathea sees it others in the Sanhedrin saw it people in the crowds saw it the disciples saw it and Drew the conclusion In John chapter 9 When he said you've got to eat my flesh and drink my blood and many departed from him This is a hard saying I forget you and Jesus said to his disciples.

Are you going to leave also? What is the reply? To whom should we go you have the words of life? The words of life, they don't say you're the miracle worker You're the one that heals the blind and makes the lame to walk and the the deaf to hear to whom would we go that? That somebody to find somebody else that has this miraculous power That great recognition you have the words of life I've not come to bring peace, but a sword it's going to divide households. It's going to divide families. What do you think of Christ? Who do you say that I am There's a robber on one side and a robber on the other one chooses one way the other chooses the other they've got exactly the same information exactly the same opportunity it's a choice and people who don't understand the role of human responsibility and the gift of autonomy and the ability to make a Self-determining choice miss one of the major themes and thrusts of scripture Because we are able to choose we are accountable for our choices.

What are we going to choose when we find ourselves in? trial in trouble and we will Do not think that you're special when some fiery ordeal comes upon you This is such as is common to man It's what do you do with it? How do you think in it and through it? What do you expect my God my God? What have you left me to? Words of my groaning Where is the deliverance? Let me think my way through that's what Psalm 22 is Verse 38 Matthew 27 two robbers were crucified with him one on the right and another on the left Those who passed by blasphemed him moving their heads This this word moving. I wish I had time to dwell on it. It's very interesting.

It says wagging It doesn't mean to wag it means Moving it's the same word remember In the preceding chapter when when Jesus was talking about the the legalistic religious leadership and how they put burdens on others and they They don't they wouldn't move them with their finger. They wouldn't move it. It's the same word they they won't move one of these burdens with their finger and It's it's a directive motion.

It's it's a gesture type of motion They won't gesture with a finger to even get somebody else, you know Look to a servant and point to a problem and say go to help that person with that heavy burden They won't even gesture with a finger When Paul is talking on the Areopagus and he's talking about The God in which we live and move and have our being that word live and move is Is this word and It's very Suggestive this word Move that is translated. It doesn't mean to wag It's it is a reminder and I think this is almost by way of a verbal Pun that such as Hebrew is fond of using where They they've put their heads in a place where they can talk like this The Old Testament equivalent you find in In Isaiah, and it's repeated twice. It's in 2nd Kings chapter 19, and it's also over in Isaiah repeated twice where when Sennacherib is coming with the army of the Assyrians and Isaiah is given a message from the Lord to deliver to Hezekiah and he's talking about the daughters of Jerusalem are Moving their heads behind Sennacherib's back and They're not afraid of him the virgin daughter of Jerusalem moves her head behind your back Oh Sennacherib Because you're never going to attack the city you're never coming in you're never going to lay a siege while you're never going to Cut off supply.

You're not ever even going to get that close and the virgin daughter of Jerusalem Moves her head and this is the this is the leadership of Hezekiah This is the response to the prophetic ministry of Isaiah that the virgin daughter of Jerusalem Moves her head it is a gesture It's it's you know, the shaking of the head the the thrusting of the head the shooting out of the lip It is a physical gesture, but it is Like a parable. It's like a symbol. It's a Representation of where is your thought life? How are you thinking? In what way are you moving your head? Are you bowing your head in prayer or are you? moving your head into a place of confidence or are you moving your head into a place of arrogance and a place of blindness and A place of scorn and derision and mocking such as you find here Why is it that the moving of the head is mentioned? You could you could eliminate that little detail and this would read just fine.

You'd never miss it, but it's included why? Thief on the right thief on the left our day-to-day life is all about what we choose God has given us Authority Opportunity and accountability in the area of our choices and It's on our head we move our head you can bow your head or you can wag your head you can shake your head but this this Body language with the head as these remarks are delivered Later on we're going to see that the Lord Jesus as he dismisses his spirit is going to bow his head Why that detail? From first to last I have come to do thy will O God in the role of the book it is written to me Remember, it's in the Old Testament is quoted in Hebrews. I have come to do thy will Let this cup pass for me nevertheless not my will but thine be done Jesus Submission is

reflected when he bows his head in prayer When he bows his head at the conclusion of his work on the cross it is all in and for from and to the Father this Shaking of the head and shooting out of the lip is the opposite the very opposite thinking You know what God would do thinking you know God's will thinking that you're righteous in Crucifying the Lord of Glory it doesn't get any worse than this and it's here for our instruction so again They say you who destroy the temple and build it in three days save yourself in verse 40 this detail this particular quote was a part of the accusation and yet, if you if you go back and look the only place that it is is Quoted it's only quoted once out of the four Gospels Where they're looking at the temple and all of its glory and Jesus says You destroy this temple and in three days, I will raise it up. It's it's a single comment He never said he would destroy the temple, but and he said it a couple of years earlier on one of the early visits to Jerusalem and This is the quote you who would destroy the temple and raise it in three days they seize on one out of context remark and He is in the process if you really understood what he was saying destroy this temple and remember the comment He was referring to his body.

He is in the process of having that temple destroyed and He didn't say destroy this temple and I'll stop you Destroy this temple and I'll destroy you instead In three days, I will raise it up. Well the the unthinking Stupidity of throwing this quote at him. Wait three days and see where the temple is But the the complete misuse of something Jesus said To attack him instead of to understand him instead of to say well If he was talking about the temple of his body, I'd better be watching what happens three days hence Which is what the disciples? themselves forgot to do and Over and over again.

He told them on the third day. He would rise again These people remember his quote about the third day his own disciples. Don't remember there are so many any Observations about the people surrounding the cross viewing the cross and not Thinking the Word of God not rightly dividing the Word of Truth the words of the Lord Jesus the words of prophecy the words of his own predictions his own disciples don't do it the onlookers don't do it and With this kind of example to warn us woe unto us if we make this same mistake So verse after verse here is focusing on the people surrounding the cross we've seen the soldiers We see the robbers on one side and on the other Matthew does not include the conversion account of the the one thief Those who passed by blasphemed moved their heads Quoted the Lord Jesus if you are the Son of God come down from the cross.

This is the this is the challenge this is the this is the the spiteful Saying well if then come down from the cross Just the way Satan began the testing of the Lord if You are the Son of God command that these stones be made bread if you are the Son of God Come down from the cross You get the idea that this is just almost satanically inspired You know Mel Gibson in his movie has some kind of bald-headed representation of Satan creeping through the crowd I've never seen the movie, but I saw a little a little three-second clip of some snake-like I think it's even a woman and and I don't know what it was but He he

attempts to represent the presence of Satan. You don't need somebody creeping through the crowd looking evil It's right here. If you are the Son of God do what I say If Jesus is the Son of God He's going to accomplish the will of the Father and the will of the Father is to complete his work, right? That's the proof that he's the Son of God is that he acknowledges the Father Whose plan whose cup it is for him to drink? But to have somebody redefine the the test Redefine the proof well prove it to me if you are the Son of God come down from the cross Likewise the chief priests also mocking with the scribes.

I don't think elders Scribes Pharisees and elders you can see the majority text in your text note there includes the Pharisees The Pharisees were not a part of this and it's interesting that they're With all of their self-righteousness and the seven woes that are pronounced on them They don't seem to be represented here at the cross and you get the idea that as the conservative element even they began to have second thoughts and regrets about the way this sham trial and crucifixion was handled and Matthew carefully excludes them here So the chief priests the scribes and the elders said he saved others But he can't be The Messiah he can't be the Son of God certainly can't be the King of Israel because he can't save himself What is the the premise if he were legitimate if he were for real he would save himself Because I know what the plan of God is at this particular moment. He's not fulfilling it therefore. He can't be What he claims or what others claim for him? If he is the king of Israel If he's the king of Israel let him now come down from the cross the second time come down from the cross You get the idea that this is perhaps Jesus greatest challenge because he absolutely has the power to come down from the cross He can choose it There are times when we are under duress.

We are under pressure and we could Pull the face curtain as they do in jets when they want to eject On the old jets at least the way to to eject is you reach up behind the pilot seat you grab this Handle with both hands and you pull this protective curtain down over your face and that triggers the ejection mechanism and the canopy flies off and you are shot vertically in the air at high speed so that the rest of the jet doesn't hit you and That's how you eject you just okay. I'm out of here. This this situation is untenable.

I'm I'm ejecting and For some of us that's the picture of you know, I've got an ejection Option here. I can just Exit I can leave this happens in Troubled relationships it happens in Troubled employment it happens in places where maybe we have a commitment and we're tempted to Abrogate that commitment to violate that covenant and get out There are times when we need to get out of something but there are other times when we need to know that this is not something to be delivered out of or to deliver ourselves out of or to forsake and abandon but to persist looking to God for strength for guidance is Jesus going to be delivered from this situation Yes, he is and soon It is how is he delivered? When is he delivered? And by whom is he delivered if? He saves himself That's That's an entirely different thing than the plan and purpose of God, which is that he be faithful Unto death For the joy that was set before him. He endured the cross being

found in appearance as a servant and as a man He humbled himself and became obedient Even unto death this is the reason God has highly exalted him God has given him a name that is above every name.

Jesus didn't give it to himself He didn't deliver himself he Entrusted his spirit to the father father into thy hands I commit my spirit and it is the power of the Holy Spirit that is going to raise the Lord Jesus from the dead and Vindicate his work But it's so interesting to me that these words are and this challenge is Repeated these words are repeated If you are the Son of God come down from the cross if he is the king of Israel Let him now come down from the cross and we will believe him Another gospel says we will see it and believe meet our test Do what we want you to do and we'll acknowledge you Be our genie that comes out of the bottle and accomplishes What we think ought to be done meet our standard This is this is why they they missed it when he came he had no form or comeliness that they should desire him He wasn't one of them. He wasn't Rich, he wasn't from a great family. He didn't come with majesty and with the the kind of Characteristics that they expected Because he didn't meet their standards.

They couldn't accept him. I want God on my terms. I want God to fulfill my expectations Fulfill my expectations and I'll believe in you It's the arrogance of it whose expectations need to be fulfilled and It's not difficult God says turn repent Acknowledge need Place your faith and trust in me.

This is a Anybody can do it. Dr. Griswold has a long list of things that God did not say He says Look unto me Look and live look and be saved there is life for a look It is a simple matter of choosing don't have to do anything But oh, no I'm not going to meet God's expectation. I want God to meet my expectation.

I'm not going to Acknowledge Jesus. I want Jesus to acknowledge my challenge meet my test Come down from the cross will believe in him He trusted in God let him deliver him now if he will have it for he said I am the Son of God direct Quote from Psalm 22 At the moment of its fulfillment They're quoting the scripture that pertains and they're blind to its meaning this just ought to be sobering to us That we can have the Word of God we can be in a situation where it applies and twist it misuse it be blind to its truth and Suffer irreparable loss and harm to ourselves as a result Even the robbers who were crucified with him reviled him with the same thing and it's interesting the robbers Plural revile him at this point but very soon one of them is Going to be convicted about that attitude and is going to change his mind He starts out joining in with this scorn But he can't sustain it. He finds himself Convicted and he realizes this is not right This man has done nothing wrong.

I'm here for a good reason the other guys here for a good reason This one has done nothing wrong And he appears to know and has heard in the past about the Lord Jesus Because he says remember me when you come into your kingdom Remember me when

you come into your kingdom and it is a reminder that the truth that gets planted in the souls of People who are at the time are still in a state of unbelief and rejection That's dynamite that's radioactive power and Jesus words about the kingdom Stuck in this man's mind Even though he's a robber even those he he's a convicted thief And he is there suffering the death penalty and this must not have been petty theft he did something wrong enough that the Romans are making an example out of him and his companion and Were they a team did they do this together? But this man heard something earlier that at this moment Comes back to his mind changes his mind and He receives the promise This day you will be with me in paradise about which we'll have more to say next time but Even the robbers at this point who were crucified with him reviled him with the same thing But it's a funny thing and you can hear somebody who is in attack mode and is Reviling God and the things of God the Bible Christians everything that's wrong with Christian faith, but don't give up. Hope Don't cease to pray that God will convict look at this thief. He starts out indistinguishable from the other but something he heard in the past came back to his mind and Convicts him at this point and the Lord Jesus Acknowledges his change of heart and He receives the promise of Resurrection and of life Well, this brings us to verse 45 from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land the word land there in Greek is gay GE You get you know, these weird hippie Tree hugging people that talk about Gaia and the goddess and mother nature and whatnot comes from this Greek word gay its Translation is a challenge and has to be determined from context Is this the entire planet? or is this the land of Israel and And Solving that puzzle Ends up taking us to places I Didn't think we would be going as a part of this study, but we're going to see it next time and it is Fascinating and it is illuminating this Light followed by darkness followed by light over the land Yeah, the Old Testament equivalent is Eretz Is it Eretz Yisrael? It is is it the land of Israel? Is it the Land in terms of its broader stretch to the the the ends of the earth When we find out how far this darkness extended during the crucifixion we're going to find out a lot of other things about the land versus the earth and It is Going to not only Reinforce what is happening here at the cross, but Old Testament prophecy and New Testament application particularly in the book of Acts and I've it will take us both sessions next Sunday to Revisit Acts chapter 1 and Acts chapter 19 and Jeremiah and Isaiah and other places in the Old Testament I will just leave you with this clue the ends of the earth aren't what you think and There are several different ends of the earth and we'll explore that next time but I close with Admiration and Appreciation of the Lord Jesus Christ Never more so than in his focus at this point where he is challenged he is dared at a satanic level of temptation to Detour away from the plan of God which at this moment requires Suffering requires patience requires faith requires focus Requires dedication at a level we can't even begin to enter into But not responding to the words of men but to the Word of God not yielding to the false standard of What God would could or should do? but what God through his word and through his spirit has Placed in the cup and to drink that cup to its full and to its conclusion The Lord Jesus never lost his focus on fulfilling the plan of the Father trusting the Father Making use of the resources to

endure this trial of all trials successfully This is our example This is our hope that we can be the body of Christ and when we suffer The way his body suffers here.

We will use the same resources and have the same dedication And be sustained by the same strength that enabled the humanity of the Lord Jesus to accomplish this greatest of all works We'll close here in a word of prayer father. Thank you for Recording for us this moment in your plan this culminating period of time in human history everything Before it looks toward it everything after it looks back to it We pray that as we reflect on it and our place in your plan that God the Holy Spirit will give us strength comfort encouragement Just as he did your son the Lord Jesus In this time of trial so that we can take up our cross We can die daily. We can be those who reflect your glory and are Qualified to join the Lord Jesus in future Areas of service and opportunity and function we pray it in Jesus name.

Amen